

REGION 3—FINGER LAKES

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In Ithaca, December had normal temperatures, but was snowier than normal. January was warmer and wetter, but less snowy than normal. February was a little warmer and snowier than normal. The average low temperature was 21.4° F, 0.1° below normal. Average high temperature was 36.1°, 0.3° above normal. Total precipitation was 3.28", 0.88" more than normal. Total snowfall was 16.3", 3.7" more than normal. There was at least 1" of snow cover on 17 days, with a maximum of 11" on 3 December.

In January, the average low temperature was 21.5°, 6.1° above normal. The average high temperature was 36.6°, 5.3° above normal. Total precipitation was 2.76", 0.68" more than normal. Total snowfall was 10.9", 6.7" less than normal. Snow cover of at least 1" was present on 18 days, with a maximum of 3" on six days.

In February, the average low temperature was 18.4°, 1.9° above normal. The average high temperature was 34.6°, 0.6° above normal. Total precipitation was 2.69", 0.71" more than normal. Total snowfall was 19.2", 5.0" more than normal. Snow cover of at least 1" was on the ground on 26 days, with a maximum depth of 11" on 8 February. Warm fronts passed through on 4, 10, 17, 23, and 27 February.

After the mild January, observers in Ithaca and Lansing reported seeing migrating Snow Geese on the first warm front in February. Maximum counts of all three of the Region's swan species were high and on Cayuga Lake. The high count of Mute Swans was in late December, Trumpeter Swans in mid-February and that of Tundra Swans in later February. Maximum counts of Canada Geese and many species of ducks came on the last day of the season. Unusual species of waterfowl included at least one Ross's Goose on Cayuga Lake, a Greater White-fronted Goose on Canandaigua Lake, a Brant or two in the Town of Lansing, a Tufted Duck on Cayuga Lake, a few Surf Scoters on Seneca Lake, a Red-necked Grebe or two on Cayuga Lake, an Eared Grebe on Seneca Lake, and a Red-throated Loon in the Owasco Lake Inlet and another on Cayuga Lake.

Maximum counts of Rock Pigeons and Mourning Doves were both low. This may be due to the widespread use of a corn harvesting method that leaves little waste corn for wildlife. The first American Woodcock report was on 26 February. A Black-headed Gull at the south end of Cayuga Lake in February was new to the Region's winter list. Also new to the Region's winter list was a Black-crowned Night-Heron in Stewart Park in December. Keuks Lake hosted a new winter high count of Double-crested Cormorants.

Two Black Vultures surprised a birder staying at the Holiday Inn in Elmira in December. Two others made appearances in January at the Stevenson Road Compost Piles in Dryden. A new winter high count of Turkey Vultures was reported at the same location in early December. Coincidentally, the same count was reported at McGowan Woods in early February. A Golden Eagle spotted over Hammond Hill State Forest on 15 February was an early spring migrant.

Three Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers at Sampson State Park was a winter high count. Abundant acorns brought abundant Blue Jays to the Region and led to a Region high count of 60 at one location in the Town of Danby. On the other hand, maximum counts of Tufted Titmice, White-breasted Nuthatches, and American Robins were low. House Wren on the Ithaca Christmas Bird Count was another new species for the Region's winter list. A Marsh Wren was at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in mid-December. Counts of two Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Hermit Thrushes were winter high counts for those species. Observers found Gray Catbirds and American Pipits at several locations.

Two species had high maximum counts of 5,000—European Starling and Snow Bunting. The only winter finches were a few Pine Siskins. Two Eastern Towhees were in the Region. A few Chipping Sparrows lingered. One in the Town of Groton was in the company of a rare Clay-colored Sparrow. A few Field and Savannah Sparrows also lingered. John Fitzpatrick's hike along Cascadilla Creek on New Year's Day not only turned up the House Wren mentioned above, but also high counts of Song and Swamp Sparrows.

The early arrival of numerous blackbirds in February led to winter high counts of Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles. Mixed in one blackbird flock were two Yellow-headed Blackbirds. A couple Eastern Meadowlarks lingered and a probable spring migrant arrived early in mid-February. A Baltimore Oriole was photographed in a Town of Danby yard.

Several Yellow-rumped Warblers lingered. Another new species to the Region's winter list was a Black-and-white Warbler photographed in Ithaca in mid-December.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

BLNA – Bluegrass Lane Natural Area, TOMP; **CC** – Cascadilla Creek, TOMP; **CygL** – Cayuga L; **FLRA** – Finger Lakes Regional Airport, SENE; **SenL** – Seneca L; **SSP** – Sampson SP; **SRCP** – Stevenson Rd Compost Piles, TOMP; **StP** – Stewart P, TOMP; **TDan** – T Danby, TOMP; **TLan** – T Lansing, TOMP.

WATERFOWL-HUMMINGBIRDS

Snow Goose: max 25,000 T Geneva SENE 15 Dec; arr 300 TLan 4 Feb (SK), early; 25,000 CygL SP 24 Feb.

Ross's Goose: arr Sheldrake Pt SENE 12 Feb (DK), early.

Greater White-fronted Goose: City Pier ONTA 30 Jan.

Brant: TLan 1-2 Feb; Ladoga P TOMP 2 Feb thru.

Canada Goose: max 8000 Frontenac P CAYU 22 Dec; 8000 T Ledyard CAYU 22 Dec; 8000 CygL, T Seneca Falls SENE 29 Feb, low.

Snow x Canada Goose: T Varick SENE 22 Jan.

Mute Swan: max 56 CygL SP 27 Dec (DK, ph), high.

Trumpeter Swan: max 27 Mud Lock CAYU 15 Feb (CP, IR, CW), high.

Tundra Swan: max 3500 NE CygL CAYU 23 Feb (JMc, LS), high.

Northern Shoveler: SenL SP 31 Dec; Mill Street Pd CHEM 16-28 Feb; 2 CygL SENE 28 Feb.

American Wigeon: max 250 CygL SENE 29 Feb (JMc, LS), high.

Mallard x Northern Pintail: Myers Pt TOMP 22-25 Jan.

TUFTED DUCK (R3): CygL TOMP 11 Jan thru (mob).

Redhead x Scaup: CygL TOMP 11-17 Jan.

Surf Scoter: 4 CygL SENE 24 Dec; Willard Town P SENE 22 Jan; SSP 1 Feb; SenL SENE 15 Feb.

Pied-billed Grebe: max 4 CygL TOMP 1 Jan, low.

Red-necked Grebe: CygL TOMP 5 Dec; CygL TOMP 51-11 Jan; CygL TOMP 9 Feb; Dresden Overlook YATE 23 Feb.

Eared Grebe: Willard Town P SENE 13 Jan-9 Feb.

Rock Pigeon: max 280 T Milo YATE 2 Feb, low.

Mourning Dove: max 46 T Dix SCHU 28 Dec, low.

RAILS-TROPICBIRDS

Sandhill Crane: max 42 Montezuma NWR 16 Dec.

American Woodcock: arr TDan 26 Feb.
BLACK-HEADED GULL (R3): CygL TOMP 9-22 Feb (mob, ph).
Ring-billed Gull: max 5000 CygL SENE 29 Feb (TLe), high.
Herring X Glaucous Gull: SRCP 16 Feb.
Herring X Great Black-backed Gull: StP 27-28 Feb.

LOONS-PARAKEET

Red-throated Loon: last Owasco L Inlet CAYU 21 Dec; East Shore P TOMP 21 Dec.
Double-crested Cormorant: max 34 Perry Pt YATE 15 Feb (TLe), high.
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (R3): StP 1-18 Dec (mob), ph.
Black Vulture: 2 Elmira Holiday Inn CHEM 30 Dec; 2 SRCP 11 & 23 Jan.
Turkey Vulture: max 64 SRCP 5 Dec (JMc); 64 McGowan Woods TOMP 5 Feb (JeCo, DNu), high; arr T Romulus SENE 12 Feb.
Golden Eagle: arr Hammond Hill State Forest TOMP 15 Feb (CW), early.
Northern Goshawk: TDry 6 Dec; Dryden L TOMP 15 Feb.
Red-shouldered Hawk: Cornell University 8 Dec.
Northern Saw-whet Owl: T Catlin CHEM 6 Jan; TDry 7 Jan; Finger Lakes National Forest SCHU 1 Feb.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: max 3 SSP SENE 10 Dec (LK, TLe, BeMa), high.

FLYCATCHERS-SNOW BUNTING

Northern Shrike: last Seybolt Road Bait Ponds SENE 1 Feb.
Blue Jay: max 60 TDan 8 Feb (RR), high.
Tufted Titmouse: max 12 T Van Etten CHEM 3-27 Dec; 12 Sapsucker Woods TOMP 15 Dec, low.
White-breasted Nuthatch: max 13 CC 1 Jan; 13 TDry 7 Jan, low.
HOUSE WREN (R3): CC 1 Jan (JF!), rec.
Marsh Wren: Montezuma NWR 16 Dec (JSn), ph.
Carolina Wren: max 10 Ithaca 1 Jan (PA), high.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: max 2 SSP 10 Dec (LK, TLe); 2 Bolton Pt TOMP 1 Jan (KMc), high.
Hermit Thrush: max 2 T Van Etten CHEM 4 Dec (JoCo), high.

American Robin: max 40 T Big Flats CHEM 18 Jan; 40 Severne Pt YATE 24 Jan, low.
Gray Catbird: BLNA 7-21 Dec; Ludovico Trail SENE 16 Dec-10 Jan; Dryden Rail Trail 1 Jan.
European Starling: max 5000 T Fayette TOMP 5 Jan (DK), high.
American Pipit: max 4 StP 2 Dec; Elmira Dam CHEM 2 Dec; FLRA 20 Jan; TLan 19 Feb; T Caroline 23 Feb.
Pine Siskin: max 6 T Southport CHEM 22 Dec.
Lapland Longspur: max 16 T Fayette SENE 23 Jan.
Snow Bunting: max 5000 T Fayette 21 Feb (MT), high.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS-CARDINALIDS

Eastern Towhee: BLNA 2-15 Dec (JMc, mob), rec; T Benton YATE 8 Dec thru; T Barrington YATE 8 Dec thru; T Torrey YATE 13 Jan (BB).
American Tree Sparrow: max 115 TDry 20 Jan.
Chipping Sparrow: Quatrano P CHEM 1 Jan; Horseheads CHEM 10-19 Jan; T Groton TOMP 16-22 Feb; TLan 19 Feb.
CLAY-COLORED SPARROW(R3): T Groton TOMP 16-22 Feb (mob!), ph.
Field Sparrow: max 4 T Romulus SENE 4 Feb (TLe, RS), high.
Savannah Sparrow: T Tyre SENE 22 Jan (DK), ph; T Covert SENE 22 Jan (JSn!).
Song Sparrow: max 46 CC 1 Jan (JF), high.
Swamp Sparrow: max 7 CC (JF), high.
Yellow-headed Blackbird: 2 T Tyre SENE 20 Feb (mob), ph.
Eastern Meadowlark: T Genoa CAYU 8 Dec (AO); T Ovid SENE 20 Jan (DiW), ph; arr T Ledyard CAYU 16 Feb (CW!), early.
BALTIMORE ORIOLE (R3): TDan 9-17 Jan (SS), ph.
Red-winged Blackbird: max 12,000 FLRA 29 Feb (JMc, LS), high.
Rusty Blackbird: BLNA 11 Dec (CW!); SenL SP 12 Dec (TL), ph.
Common Grackle: max 2000 FLRA 29 Feb (JMc, LS), high.
BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (R3): Cass P TOMP 15 Dec (DNu), ph.
Yellow-rumped Warbler: max 5 Louis Agassiz Fuertes Bird Sanctuary TOMP 1 Jan.